

Listing of the Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for producing a nonwoven for the manufacture of filter rods in the tobacco industry, comprising:

introducing fibers with a finite length to at least one separating device having a rotational axis, said fibers being introduced in a parallel direction of ~~a longitudinal~~ the rotational axis of the at least one separating device;

separating the introduced fibers of at least one type of filter material into individualized fibers in the at least one separating device; said at least one separating device having an outer drum and at least one inner separating element rotating about a the rotational axis where the at least one inner, rotating separating element tears the introduced fibers apart and accelerates the separated, individualized fibers; and

feeding the separated, individualized fibers to a conveyor moving in a conveying direction such that the separated fibers form the nonwoven wherein a the rotational axis of the at least one separating device is oriented essentially parallel to the conveying direction of the conveyor.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one separating device is two separate separating devices and the separating step includes separating fibers of at least two types of filter material, with one type of filter material being separated in each separating device.

Claim 4 (Original): The method of claim 3, further comprising combining the two types of separated fibers prior to the feeding step.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A method for producing a nonwoven for the production of filter rods in the tobacco industry, comprising:

introducing fibers with a finite length to at least two separating devices where each separating device has an inner rotating element and an outer drum, said fibers having at least two types of filter material, said fibers being introduced into the at least two separating devices between the respective outer drum and the inner rotating element in a parallel direction of a ~~longitudinal~~ respective, rotational axis of each of the at least two separating devices;

separating the introduced fibers of the at least two types of filter materials in separate separating devices of the at least two separating devices so that one filter material is separated by a first separating device and the other type of filter material is separated by the second separating device;

combining the separated fibers; and

feeding the separated fibers to a conveyor moving in a conveying direction such that the separated fibers form the nonwoven wherein each ~~separating device comprises one separating~~ inner rotating element of a respective separating device that rotates around a the respective, rotational axis, which is oriented essentially parallel to the conveying direction of the conveyor.

Claim 6 (Canceled).

Claim 7 (Original): The method of claim 1, wherein in the feeding step includes feeding the separated fibers from above the conveyor.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 3, wherein one of the at least two types of filter material is a multi-component fiber.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 3, wherein one of the at least two types of filter material is a bi-component fiber.

Claim 10 (Original): The method of claim 1, further comprising adding at least one of granulate and powder to the separated fibers before the feeding step.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A machine for producing a nonwoven for the production of filter rods in the tobacco industry, comprising:

at least one separating device having a rotational axis for separating fibers of at least one type of filter material, wherein the at least one separating device includes an outer separating drum and an inner separating element rotating within the outer separating drum and the fibers are introduced with a finite length in a parallel direction of a longitudinal axis of the at least one inner, rotating separating element between the inner rotating element and the outer drum to separate the introduced fibers into individual fibers device, ~~and the at least one separating device includes a rotating separating element;~~ and

a conveyor downstream of the at least one separating device for receiving the separated fibers from the at least one separating device wherein the rotating separating

element has a rotational axis essentially oriented parallel to the conveying direction of the conveyor.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The machine according to claim 11, wherein the at least one separating device includes at least two separating devices, at least one of which has a rotating separating element, and said at least two separating devices are arranged above the conveyor.

Claim 13 (Canceled).

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The machine of claim 11, wherein at least two of the separating devices are provided, the at least two separating devices being separate from one another.

Claim 15 (Previously Presented): The machine according to claim 14, further comprising conveying chutes respectively arranged downstream of each separating device.

Claim 16 (Previously Presented): The machine of claim 15, wherein the conveying chutes converge with one another to form a chamber upstream of the conveyor.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): An arrangement for producing a nonwoven for the manufacture of filter rods in the tobacco industry, comprising:

a device for feeding fibers of a finite length and of at least one type of filter material;

at least two separating devices for respectively separating fibers of at least one type of filter material that the feeding device feeds to the at least two separating devices where each separating device has a respective rotational axis, an inner rotating element and an outer drum;

a conveying chute provided downstream of each separating device, wherein the outer drums of the separating devices have different designs so that each separating device separates fibers of ~~one type~~ different types; and

a conveyor downstream of the at least two separating devices such that the separated fibers are provided to the conveyor to form a nonwoven, wherein each inner rotating element of a respective ~~the at least two separating device devices each comprise at least one separating element having~~ has a rotational axis oriented essentially parallel to a conveying direction of the conveyor.

Claim 18. (Canceled).

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The arrangement of claim 17, wherein the conveying chutes converge in a downstream direction to form a chamber.

Claim 20 (Original): The arrangement according to claim 17, wherein the at least two separating devices are arranged above the conveyor.

Claim 21 (New): The machine according to claim 11, wherein the outer separating drum rotates in an opposite direction to that of the inner separating element, is provided with a screen for separating fibers of at least one type of filter material, and the introduced fibers pass through the screen of the outer rotating separating drum to separate the introduced fibers of finite length into individual fibers.

Claim 22 (New): The machine according to Claim 11, wherein the at least one separating device includes at least two separating devices, each having outer separating drums that rotate in an opposite direction to that of the inner separating element and being provided with screens having openings of different openings so that each separating drum separates a different fiber diameter and/or length.

Claim 23 (New): The machine according to 11, wherein the outer separating drum rotates in an opposite direction to that of the inner separating element and is provided with perforated sheets forming openings through which the introduced fibers are passed to separate the introduced fibers into individualized fibers.